MARVEL

197

BEMIS
BURROWS
ORTEGO
MILLA

MOON KNIGHT

ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. ENOUGH GRANDSTANDING SUPPLICATION.

LET US BEGIN.

WELCOME TO THE BI-ANNUAL FEAST OF THE *SOCIETE DES SADIQUES.*

YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN-- *SELECTED*--FROM A VAST POOL OF CANDIDATES.

HAVING PROVED YOUR LOYALTY, YOUR *ZEAL*, AND YOUR PASSION.

LIBERATION McALLISTER, ESTEEMED PHOTOGRAPHER.

LYLA DECRISCIO, INTERNATIONAL DRUG LORD AND EXECUTIVE-LEVEL MADAME.

SOL EDMUND, WHO HOLDS A VERY *PARTICULAR* DISTINCTION, EVEN IN THIS GROUP.

AND THE MAN KNOWN ONLY BY HIS ENIGMATIC SOBRIQUET... *TILT.*

TILT IS, AS YOU PROBABLY ALREADY KNOW, A TATTOO ARTIST, BODY PIERCER, AND REALITY TELEVISION MOGUL.

YOU, MY NEW FRIENDS, ARE ***PRIVILEGED.***

THOUGH IT'S BEEN 80 YEARS SINCE ITS FOUNDATION, OUR GROUP HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY SELECTIVE.

SO YOU CAN BE SATISFIED IN KNOWING THAT OF ALL THE CANDIDATES WE'VE PORED THROUGH...

...YOU FOUR ARE BY FAR THE MOST WELL-VERSED IN OUR FIXATION...

SADISM, IN ALL ITS SHAPES AND FORMS.

SO, PLEASE, REGALE US TONIGHT WITH HOW YOU FOUND YOURSELVES HERE.

HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW AND PRACTICE YOUR FASCINATION WITH THE PAIN OF OTHERS.

AND THEN WE WILL CELEBRATE BY PERFORMING ***THE RITUAL.***

Marc Spector. Steven Grant. Jake Lockley. Each a distinct personality of one man vying for control. Spector, the original personality, has asserted his dominance and fights to retain that control. But years ago, as a mercenary, Spector died in Egypt under a statue of the moon god **Khonshu.** In the shadow of the ancient deity, Marc returned to life. From then on, Marc took on a new aspect in honor of Khonshu, dedicating his second life to fighting crime as…

MOON KNIGHT

Discovering he had a daughter caused Marc to undergo intense self-reflection. He opened up to Frenchie about his childhood trauma with a sadistic Nazi named Ernst. He talked with his daughter Diatrice about his mental illness. Marc Spector, once a man of war, is now trying to make peace--with his inner voices, his mental illness, and his past. But peace is hard to find, especially when you are sworn to a vengeful god to protect those who travel by night.

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LIBERATION.

PHOTOGRAPHY IS THE MOST AMORPHOUS OF THE ARTS.

PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, IT'S JUST CAPTURING SOME ERRANT LIGHT REPRESENTING A MOMENT YOU DIDN'T EVEN CREATE.

THEY ALSO SAY PEOPLE WHO DON'T KNOW *WHAT THEY'RE REALLY INTO* IN HIGH SCHOOL GET INTO PHOTOGRAPHY.

THAT'S WRONG.

I KNEW *EXACTLY* WHAT I WAS DOING.

NEW YORK, EARLY 2000s. BOUGIE, COKED-UP ROCK SHOWS WHERE FASHION HEIRESSES RUBBED ELBOWS WITH STREET PUNKS JUST SO THEY COULD BE HIP.

I WAS 19, FAILING OUT OF SARAH LAWRENCE, AND SOMEBODY HAD TO BE SOBER ENOUGH TO CHRONICLE IT.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME.

TO THIS DAY, I'VE NEVER HAD A DROP OR A SNIFF.

DON'T GET ME WRONG. I, LIKE, *DESPISE* MINOR THREAT. IT'S NOT INDULGENCE ITSELF I'M OPPOSED TO.

IT'S JUST... I'M NOT ONE FOR *PETTY* VICES.

THEN AGAIN, I'M ALL FOR DRUGS. IF IT WEREN'T FOR DRUGS...

WELL, LONG STORY SHORT, I PHOTOGRAPHED MY FIRST CADAVER IN 2001 AT CBGB.

NOBODY KNEW.

NOBODY FOUND HER UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

EVERYONE WAS TOO FAR GONE TO NOTICE.

A QUARTER OF THE PEOPLE AT THOSE SHOWS WERE MODELS.

SO PHOTOGRAPHING SHOWS AND PARTIES TURNED INTO FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY.

ONCE PEOPLE REALIZED I MADE A PHOTOSHOOT FEEL LIKE A MIXTURE BETWEEN CREATING MODERN ART AND ATTENDING A FRAT PARTY, QUITE FRANKLY...*THEY WERE LINING UP.*

SOON FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY LED TO TAKING PICTURES OF ACTORS. TECH MOGULS. *PRESIDENTS.*

Zeitgeist

I WASN'T JUST A SHUTTERBUG. I WAS A *BRAND.*

OF COURSE, THERE WAS THE ISSUE OF INDULGING *MY TRUE* CALLING. THE ONE I DISCOVERED IN THAT DISGUSTING BATHROOM AT CBGB.

YOU'D BE SURPRISED, THE WHOLESOME-SEEMING PEOPLE WHO HAD *UNUSUAL* PROCLIVITIES FOR "BLACK MARKET" PHOTOGRAPHY...

PEOPLE WITH "TASTE" DIDN'T WANT THE SAME OLD THING. THEY WANTED THEIR... PRIVATE COLLECTION....TO LOOK AS INTERESTING AS THE GAUDY GARBAGE THEY PUT ON THEIR WALLS.

SO AS I TOOK OVER THE ART WORLD IN THE PUBLIC EYE, I WAS MONOPOLIZING A MUCH MORE PROFITABLE MARKET BEHIND THE SCENES...

...*SNUFF COUTURE.*

IT'S MADE ME A SECRET BILLIONAIRE AND I'M HONORED TO SAY IT'S BROUGHT ME TO THIS TABLE ON THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION.

BRAVO, BRAVO.

LYLA, MY DEAR... WILL YOU GIVE US THE HONOR?

YOU'VE PROBABLY NOTICED, BUT...

THE MAFIA IS A LOT LESS SCARY THESE DAYS.

LYLA.

"JUST AS OBESE, SWEATY WHITE BUSINESSMEN BEGAN TO REALIZE THEY WERE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIVES AGAINST THE SUPERIORITY OF THE CHINESE ECONOMY...

"...OBESE, SWEATY MAFIA DONS BEGAN TO REALIZE THEY WERE HAVING THEIR ASSES HANDED TO THEM BY THE CHINATOWN TRIADS.

"THESE GUYS WERE EXPANDING. AND THEY WERE NASTY. AND THE MOB'S OLD-SCHOOL DOGMA WASN'T CUTTING IT ANYMORE.

"BUT AS ANTIQUATED AS THE ITALIANS WERE BECOMING, THEY WERE STILL ABLE TO MAINTAIN ONE THING FOR CERTAIN.

"THEY WERE *MEAN AS HELL.*

"WHAT WAS GOING TO BE A STRAIGHT-UP ASSASSINATION OF THE HEAD OF THE TRIADS COULD HAVE TURNED SERIOUSLY MESSY WHEN HIS WIFE AND 2-MONTH-OLD CHILD TURNED OUT TO BE HOME AT THE TIME.

"BUT SOMETHING PROFOUNDLY MORE $%#&-UP WAS AFOOT."

BAM

THAT WAS THE DAY MY LIFE OF CRIME BEGAN.

SEE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SOME KIND OF WEIRD FAIRY TALE IF I WAS BROUGHT UP BY THE MAFIA DON WHO ORDERED THE HIT. MY LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN A WALK IN THE PARK.

BUT WHEN THEY STOLE ME, THEY ENTRUSTED ME TO DANIEL DECRISCIO, ALSO KNOWN AS "THE DEATHBRINGER" IN THE PRESS FOR BEING, AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH, THE MOST PROLIFIC AND BRUTAL HITMAN OF ALL TIME.

THE MAN I'D COME TO CALL "FATHER."

I KNEW WHERE I CAME FROM. I WASN'T TREATED LIKE A CHILD.

HE MADE ME FIGHT ON THE STREETS FOR MY OWN FOOD.

LITERALLY. NOTHING WAS GIVEN TO ME. EVERYTHING I ATE, EVERYTHING I HAD, WAS TAKEN FROM SOMEBODY ELSE. BY FORCE, IF NECESSARY.

HE NEVER STRUCK ME. BUT I WASN'T ALLOWED TO SLEEP OR EAT UNTIL I TRAINED.

SOON IT WENT FROM PUNCHING BAGS TO PUNCHING VAGRANTS AND JUNKIES.

I LEARNED TO KILL BEFORE I WORE MY FIRST BRA.

AND SO I DID. KILL, THAT IS. A LOT.

I THINK I WAS NEARING TRIPLE DIGITS BY THE TIME I WAS 20.

I WAS *GOOD.* I ROSE THROUGH THE RANKS.

WHEN I FINALLY CAME FOR HIM, HE KNEW IT WAS COMING.

I THINK HE KNEW IT WAS COMING FOR YEARS. HE MUST HAVE SEEN IT IN MY EYES EVEN WHEN I WAS LITTLE.

AFTER I PUT HIM IN THE GROUND, THE OBVIOUS THING TO DO WOULD HAVE BEEN TO GO AFTER THE BIG GUYS, RIGHT?

THE GUYS WHO, ULTIMATELY, DID THIS TO ME?

CHOSE MY LIFE FOR ME. STOLE ME AND FORCED ME INTO A LIVING HELL.

BUT ANOTHER THING I LEARNED FROM DANIEL...*PICK YOUR BATTLES.*

IT MUST HAVE BEEN EMBARRASSING FOR THEM, ME BEING MADE.

I SIMPLY HAD TOO MANY FRIENDS IN LOW PLACES FOR THEM TO KILL ME.

SO, RELUCTANTLY, ***SECRETLY***, I WAS ALLOWED TO JOIN THEIR RANKS.

AND ONE...

...BY ONE...

...THEY CAME TO KNOW WHAT THEY HAD CREATED.

I STILL OPERATE IN SECRET, SAVE FOR THE CLUED-IN.

HOW MY REAL FATHER WOULD REJOICE IF HE ONLY KNEW WHAT SWEET REVENGE HE'S UNKNOWINGLY HAD.

THE MOST POWERFUL RISING MOB BOSS SINCE WILSON FISK IS NOT A SWEATY, OBESE IRISH OR ITALIAN MALE.

THE FUTURE, AS THEY SAY, IS FEMALE.

SALUTE.

HEY.

SOL.

SOL.

MY CLAIM TO FAME ISN'T AS INTERESTING.

WELL, I STARTED OUT BY LOBBING GRENADES IN PUBLIC PLACES AND RUNNING AWAY.

NO PARTICULAR MOTIVATION BESIDES... THROWING A COG IN THE MACHINE.

THE WEIRD THING IS, THEY NEVER CAUGHT ME.

SO, I WENT ON TO START MURDERING RANDOM WOMEN FROM 1999 'TIL THE PRESENT.

THEY DIDN'T CATCH ME FOR THAT, EITHER.

I GUESS I MADE THE CUT BECAUSE I'M THE ONLY LIVING MAN WHO'S BEEN BOTH A SERIAL KILLER AND A MASS MURDERER.

TILT.

TATTOOS AND PIERCINGS

TAGGING. SKATING. PLAYING IN A PUNK BAND.

I GOT INTO EVERYTHING TEXTBOOK "BADASS," BUT I SETTLED ON BODY ART AND PIERCING.

OPENED MY OWN PLACE.

DEVILS

GUESS I WAS GOOD AT IT. PEOPLE STARTED SHOWING UP TO WATCH ME WORK.

I GOT A REP AS A STRONG *INKER.*

BUT WHAT REALLY *MADE* ME WAS PUTTING HOLES IN PEOPLE.

STARTED OUT DOING YOUR STANDARD NOSE, EARS, LIPS, AND WHATNOT.

THAT WAS OKAY. FOR A WHILE.

THEN I LANDED THE SHOW.

PEOPLE LIKED THE SHOW A LOT.

FAME

SO PRETTY SOON I BECAME, WELL...REALLY RICH.

A LOT OF PEOPLE WANTED ME TO DO MY THING.

AND BEING RICH MADE IT SO I COULD HAVE WHATEVER I WANTED.

LAW + BAIL BONDS

AND ALL I EVER REALLY WANTED...WAS TO *PIERCE SOMEONE TO DEATH.*

OVER THE YEARS, I'VE PERFECTED THE ART OF *HURT.*

SEE, I CAME FROM NOTHING. GREW UP IN PRETTY HORRIBLE CIRCUMSTANCES.

I WAS ALREADY MAD THEN.

AND ONCE I HAD MONEY, THEY STARTED TREATING ME DIFFERENT.

LIKE NOW I WAS FINALLY *WORTH* SOMETHING.

THAT MADE ME EVEN MADDER.

SO NOW...

...I GET EVEN.

WOO-HOO!

ANOTHER CLASSIC.

I LOVE HOW *NOT DARK* THIS WHOLE THING IS!

UGH.

WHAT *IS* THIS?

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

DO YOU KNOW WHO *WE ARE?*

YOU'RE BARELY FIT TO *SERVE US BOOZE.*

IT WAS PRETTY GOOD, THOUGH, RIGHT? I HEARD THIS WINE PAIRS WELL WITH PSYCHOPATHOLOGY.

GET OUT OF THAT SEAT, *TRASH.*

WELL, THE THING IS, LYLA, YOU CHARMING FLATTERER...

I'M ACTUALLY HERE FOR THE INDUCTION CEREMONY.

I'D LIKE TO THROW MY HAT IN THE RING.

HI. I'M MOON KNIGHT...

...AND I'M A *SADIST.*

NO, NO! I'M NOT $%#& WITH YOU!

I REALLY AM!

MMMPH.

THIS SPREAD...IT IS, INDEED, GOOD.

I MEAN, YEAH, I GOT INTO WHAT I DO TO SAVE PEOPLE'S LIVES.

I'M A GOOD GUY.

BUT I WAS MESSED UP AS A CHILD AND ENDED UP WITH DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER.

LIKE, THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE LIVING IN MY HEAD.

PEOPLE COPE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

RATHER THAN BECOME A BAD PERSON MYSELF, I DECIDED TO START PROFESSIONALLY BEATING THE SNOT OUT OF EVIL CRIMINALS.

IT'S BASICALLY MY JOB. AND YOU HAVE TO START ENJOYING YOUR WORK OR...WHAT'S THE POINT?

THAT BROKEN PART OF ME IS MADE OF BLEAK, PITCH-BLACK FURY. SO, THE BLOOD-SPRAY AND BONE BREAKING...

...I WON'T LIE, I ENJOY IT. I LOOK FORWARD TO IT, SOMETIMES.

HARD TO ADMIT, BUT IT'S TRUE.

SO, I'M GOING TO HURT EVERY ONE OF YOU.

HURT YOU BADLY, IF YOU DON'T COOPERATE.

AND YEAH... I'M GOING TO KIND OF *REALLY, REALLY ENJOY IT.*

DID I MAKE THE CUT?

BRAKABRAKABRAKABRAKA

WHAM

THUMP

BAM

SLICE

AH!

ENOUGH.

ENOUGH!

THE MASKED MAN IS NOT TO BE HARMED.

AT LEAST...NOT YET.

I KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME.

IN THE *EXCLUSIVE* CIRCLES I RUN IN...

...THE THREAT OF YOUR EXISTENCE, AS WELL AS YOUR TRUE IDENTITY, ARE A KNOWN QUANTITY.

AND I KNEW YOU'D KNOW. AND THAT ONE DAY I'D FIND YOU.

WHY DO YOU THINK I'M *HERE?*

WELL, YOU'VE MADE IT JUST IN TIME FOR THE RITUAL.

AND YOU'VE EARNED A *PERSONAL INVITATION...*

...COURTESY OF YOUR *UNCLE ERNST.*

TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT MONTH:

Send letters to **MHEROES@marvel.com**, be sure to mark them **"OK TO PRINT."**

ZONE